

TOWN OF LATAH  
Spokane County, Washington  
January 1, 1994 Through December 31, 1995

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Schedule Of Findings

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1. Town Officials Should Not Make Gifts Of Public Funds

During our review of the town's water and sewer utility services, we noted the following instances where the town council improperly forgave or reduced accounts receivable.

- a. The town council forgave a customer's water use charges in the amount of \$834 due to a faulty water line that was on the customer's property. This is not in accordance with the town's ordinance.
- b. The town council forgave one half of a renter's unpaid water bill. The resident moved without paying the final water bill. This was a rental property and the owner appealed to council that the final bill be shared equally between the owner and the town.
- c. The rental fees on the community center were waived or reduced on several occasions based upon requests submitted to council from users of the community center. There was no benefit to the town for waiving or reducing the fees.

Article VIII, Section 7 of the *Constitution of the State of Washington* states in part:

No county, city, town, or other municipal corporation shall hereafter give any money, or property, or loan its money, or credit to or in aid of any individual, association, company, or corporation, except for the necessary support of the poor and infirm . . . .

Town Ordinance No. 141, Section 3 states:

New Service. The line from the main to the meter, and the meter proper shall be maintained by the town. Maintenance from the meter to the dwelling or place of use shall be the responsibility of the user.

Town Ordinance No. 167 states:

. . . any bill not paid by the 25th of the month will have a \$10.00 late fee added to it. Any customer not paying their bill within 45 days from the 1st of the month will have their water shut off.

We recommend the town explore appropriate legal remedies to collect the water use charges and community center fees that are owed to the town.